

# **Budget Team's Checklist for Form 4a**

## VISION AND VALUES GUIDE

**Vision Statement:** A compelling description of a desired future. (Optional)

*Indicate if the vision statement meets the criteria below.*

VISION STATEMENT CHECKSHEET		
Test Questions	YES	NO
Does the vision statement provide an inspiring and challenging picture of the organization's ideal future?		
Is the vision statement clearly related to the organization's mission?		
Is the vision statement brief enough to be memorable? (one sentence or less)		

**Values:** Principles or beliefs that guide behavior and decisions within the organization. (Optional)

*Indicate if the values meet the criteria below.*

VALUES STATEMENT CHECKSHEET		
Test Questions	YES	NO
Can the values act as a foundation for the mission and vision?		
Are values included that describe the behavioral expectations of all employees in the organization?		
Are values included that describe the way stakeholders should be treated?		

## MISSION STATEMENT GUIDE

**Mission:** A brief statement defining why the agency, program, or activity exists.

*Indicate if the mission statement meets the criteria below.*

MISSION STATEMENT CHECKLIST		
Test Questions	YES	NO
Does the statement begin with a verb phrase: "To ...."		
Does it reflect the legal responsibilities delegated to the agency by the Constitution of Alabama and/or the Code of Alabama?		
Is it broad enough that all staff in the organization can see how they contribute?		
Will it make sense to average citizens if they see it on your office wall?		

## GOALS GUIDE

**Goals:** Broad, long-term descriptions of strategic direction.

*Indicate if the goals meet the criteria below. Complete one column for each goal.*

GOALS CHECKSHEET					
Test Questions	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
Does the goal support and elaborate the mission?					
Is it consistent with the agency's legal authority?					
Does each goal deal with just one issue?					
Does the goal represent a desired long-term result that can be measured?					
Does the goal reflect a primary activity or strategic direction?					
Does the goal encompass a relatively long period, i.e., three years or longer?					
Is there at least one key goal for each program or activity, but not more than can be reasonably managed?					
When taken collectively, will the goals reflect most of the program's budget?					

## ASSUMPTIONS GUIDE

**Assumptions:** Key projections about the operating environment that will affect program operations.

*Indicate if the assumptions meet the criteria below.*

ASSUMPTIONS CHECKSHEET		
Test Questions	YES	NO
<p>Do the assumptions cover the key cost and operating factors that are determinants of the budget for the agency, program, or activity? In particular, do they project such factors as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The demand or need for services (caseload trends, population trends, etc.)?</li> <li>• Cost factors related to services (rising cost of contracted services, personnel, and other resources)?</li> <li>• Legal requirements that set minimum standards and have cost or caseload implications (consent decrees, court orders, etc.)?</li> </ul>		
Does each assumption address a single cost or operating factor?		

## CRITICAL ISSUES GUIDE

**Critical Issues:** The issues that present the greatest threat to achievement of program or activity goals. Critical issues are defined as *internal* or *external*. Internal issues are those under the control of the agency; external issues are outside the control of the agency.

*Indicate if the critical issues meet the criteria below.*

CRITICAL ISSUES CHECKSHEET		
Test Questions	YES	NO
Does each critical issue identify a problem that can and must be resolved to improve performance? Issues that reflect conditions no one can resolve (e.g., interest group pressure on the Legislature) are not critical for the planning process.		
Can the agency achieve its mission if the issue remains unresolved? If so, the issue is not mission-critical.		
Has the agency listed all external issues related to personnel, purchasing, and other intra-governmental processes that may prevent it from achieving its mission? This section of the plan should be seen as a conversation with the Governor and Legislature to raise problems that policy makers can and must resolve for the agency.		

## OBJECTIVES GUIDE

**Objectives:** Specific and measurable targets to be achieved within the coming fiscal year. There should be at least four objectives for each agency, program, or activity: a spending objective, a staffing objective, an efficiency objective, and a quality objective.

*Indicate if the objectives meet the criteria below.*

Test Questions	YES	NO
<b>SPENDING OBJECTIVE:</b> Does the spending objective quantify the increase in spending planned for the agency, program, or activity in both total dollars and percentage terms?		
<b>STAFFING OBJECTIVE:</b> Does the staffing objective quantify the level of staffing planned for the agency, program, or activity, in terms of the number and percentage increase in full-time-equivalent employees (FTE)?		
<b>EFFICIENCY OBJECTIVE:</b> Does the efficiency objective quantify the planned relationship between services produced and resources used? Examples include the cost of producing one unit of service (e.g., cost per patient-day) and the staff workload (caseload per worker).		
<b>QUALITY OBJECTIVE:</b> Does the quality objective quantify the planned effectiveness of services, in terms of such factors as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timeliness (% of applications processed within a time standard),</li> <li>• professional standards (% of students passing the graduation exam), and</li> <li>• adequacy of coverage (institutional occupancy rate)</li> </ul>		

## STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN GUIDE

**Action Plan:** A detailed description of steps and resources that will be used to achieve a goal.

*Indicate if the strategic action plan meets the criteria below.*

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN CHECKSHEET					
Test Questions	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Has the agency included a numbered strategy for each critical issue, and for the objectives in its plan?					
Is each strategy represented by a short descriptive sentence that describes what the agency intends to accomplish in order to resolve the critical issue or meet the key objective?					

Note: Does the agency have an action plan to back up its strategy? It is not necessary to document the steps in the plan for FY 2005-06, but the agency should be able to explain them.